DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 354 541 CS 213 714

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TITLE Changing Models of English Teaching.
PUB DATE Nov 92
NOTE 39p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English (82nd, Louisville, KY, November 18-23, 1992). Very small print in some accompanying handouts may affect legibility.
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Educational History; *Educational Philosophy; Educational Theories; Educational Trends; *Elementary Secondary Education; English Curriculum; *English Instruction; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Models; *Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS British National Curriculum; England; *English Teachers; Wales

ABSTRACT

Research and controversy continues to surround the principles that underpin the teaching of English. English teachers, nonetheless, must understand and be able to articulate a rationale for what they believe to be important in the teaching of English. In Great Britain the introduction of a National Curriculum for England and Wales has produced a ferment of activity, including intense scrutiny of the way English has been taught. In Britain, five models of English teaching were defined by a government committee: personal growth, cross-curricular, adult needs, cultural heritage, and cultural analysis. A survey was conducted with the purpose of discovering what practicing English teachers thought about the various models as well as the institution of a national curriculum. Forty-six respondents from a range of schools were studied via questionnaire between January and March 1992. The teachers were asked to rank the priority of the five models. Teacher responses indicated that the personal growth model was the most favored model currently. Answers given to numerous specific questions about methods and models of teaching provide ample evidence of the current state of teacher attitude and philosophy in Britain. Cultural analysis seems to be growing while the cultural heritage model no longer dominates as the power of the canon continues to weaken. The survey suggests the need to do further investigation into the possibilities of both cultural analysis and media studies as models for English instruction. (Several handouts, including a copy of the questionnaire and survey results, are attached.) (HB)

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CHANGING MODELS OF ENGLISH TEACHING

NCTE CONFERENCE PAPER November 1992

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Handouts and copies of OHPs

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INTRODUCTION

In my brief talk to day I should like to report on some ongoing research into the principles that underpin English teaching. It is almost a cliche that we must understand and articulate our rationale for what we believe to be important in the teaching of our subject but equally we are all well aware that much of our daily practice operates on the surface of such deep concerns. We work implicitly and, under the intense pressure of teaching, however reflective we are as teachers, we rarely have time to scrutinise in any rigorous way why we make the choices we do.

In Great Britain the introduction of a National Curriculum for England and Wales has produced a ferment of activity. All subjects have undergone a process of scrutiny and redefinition. To simplify an immensely complex process, one result of this scrutiny has been that English and English teachers have been assaulted on all sides and as usual blamed for everything from the total illiteracy of the nation to the much worse crime that English cricketers cannot bat well any more because they were not taught grammar at school. Some powerful groups think that more control over teachers through this National Curriculum will solve all problems.

One part of this ferment is that everyone connected to the subject of English has been questioning whether there is such a thing as a definable English or whether there are various models in operation. My research is an attempt to find out what models do exist in practice and also how teachers feel about them and about the momentum of change. Can the models of English teaching that the best teachers believe in survive these reactionary pressures?

I hope that this examination of British models of English teaching and of how they are standing up to political and partisan pressures will be of interest and value to my American colleagues. I have begun to collaborate directly with American colleagues to see how far the British models are comparable with current American ones --- but perhaps more of that next year. At this point I invite you to hear what your British colleagues say and to speculate on what your fellow Americans might say.

BACKGROUND

This background is the sheet one of your handouts. HAND OUT 1

In England and Wales a National Curriculum has been rapidly introduced over the last three years. One aspect of this has been an attempt to define and prescribe how English should be taught to all pupils from the ages of 5-16. A number of bodies have been influential in creating the English part of the National Curriculum. The most important of these was the government appointed English Working Party chaired by a Professor of Literature at Manchester University, Brian Cox, the committee and its documents have gradually become known as THE COX COMMITTEE and THE COX REPORT. The report forms the basis for the current description of English in the National Curriculum.

The Cox committee defined five models of English teaching, Personal Growth, Cross-curricular, Adult Needs, Cultural Heritage and Cultural Analysis. The full description of these models is included on a separate handout. HAND OUT 2

Brian Cox's argument has always been that these models were relatively uncontentious in themselves "It is possible to identify within the English teaching profession a number of different views of the subject. We list them here, though we stress that they are not the only possible views, they are not sharply distinguishable, and they are certainly not mutually exclusive."

This paragraph, expressed in such apparently simple and objective terms, contains several issues that need attention. If it is possible to identify these views with such ease then exactly where are they found and who has expounded them? The following are some of the questions that struck me as important.

If they are not the only possible views then are there other important views that Cox and his committee were consciously avoiding?

If the views are not sharply distinguishable then how can they be set out as if they are quite distinct?

Equally which views are complementary to the others, is there no tension in this diverse grouping?

Is there a hierarchy of models that exists in practice if not in theory?

The authority of these views being "certainly not mutually exclusive" begs the significant question of exactly who says so apart from Cox and his committee.

The paragraph quoted above which introduces the "views of English" clearly has a rhetorical intention and one which is a dominating feature of the whole report. We are invited to share in the exquisite balance of views, to join the reasonable consensus that somehow manages to operate, for example, the conservative cultural heritage at the same time as the radical cultural analysis.

It would be easy to dismiss Cox's superficial synthesis as simply part of the report's comforting rhetoric. However for me the lingering concern was not about myself and my reactions to Cox but about the validity of Cox's generalisations. I, and others, could easily say, where is your evidence but then so might he. What do English teachers themselves actually think about these models? Perhaps Cox is right about the happy coexistence of five apparently disparate and even oppositional views? There is already an overwhelming body of literature in which the debate about what constitutes the right model or models of English is well documented.

In Britain one thing was clear by 1990, the reaction to Cox's final report was generally positive, organisations such as NATE, the British equivalent of NCTE, welcomed it in broad terms and teachers in schools seemed relieved by the report's contents and supportive of Cox's ideas.

So Cox seemed to have considerable evidence for his assertions, perhaps his statements deserved the authority they claimed? In order to answer the questions set out above relating to Cox's authority I decided to investigate what a range of teachers of English had to say. This research is by no means complete but it seems worth offering some tentative conclusions.

THE SURVEY

What I wished to establish was whether the majority of English teachers supported Cox's views and whether they saw the National Curriculum changes inspired by Cox as a welcome move or not. I surveyed a number of departments using questionnaires. The whole questionnaire itself is included as a handout (HANDOUT 3) and you might like to try out your own responses. You will find it useful to follow the questions on the survey as I go through the results.

The current sample contains 46 respondents from a range of schools. These questionnaires were issued and returned between January and March 1992.

At the beginning of the questionnaire participants were asked to indicate their personal order of priorities in relation to the models, they were also asked what they considered to be currently the order of influence of those models upon English teaching. 1 ranks as most important, 5 as least, the lower the number the greater the overall significance.

The figures on the OHP and your handout are the total for each model divided by the number of respondents. This gives us an overview of current opinion.

	PERSONAL PRIORITIES	CURRENT INFLUENCES
Personal Growth	1.43	2.1
Adult Needs	3.7	3.6
Cross-curricular	3.5	2.5
Cultural Heritage	3.7	3.5
Cultural Analysis	2.5	3.3

There is no doubt at all that at present Personal Growth is the most important model for the majority of teachers and it is also perceived as most influential. In terms of personal priorities Adult Needs, Cross-curricular and Cultural Heritage are barely distinguishable, all are almost equivalent in weighting to a fourth choice. Interestingly Cross-curricular though not important as a personal priority is perceived as quite a strong influence. The most striking element of this part of the survey relates to Cultural Analysis. It is the second priority for English teachers but is not considered very influential on practice in a general way. How can we account for this difference? It is best to consider the results of the individual questions before answering that particular one.

In discussing the results I have tried to avoid too many fussy statistics.

1. The response to whether English teachers should use all five models in their teaching was almost a unanimous agreement. The figure is 1.6 and the majority of responses are strong agreements. This supports Cox contention and suggests that English teachers approve strongly of a range of views about English and believe in the range as a kind of repertoire to draw on.

2., 3., 4., 5. and 6. The group of questions about media education (OHP 2 and HANDOUT 5) provide very interesting evidence of English at a point of change though currently in a state of some confusion.

No respondent strongly agreed that media education belongs in English. About 15% agreed whilst 25% disagreed, though only one strongly disagreed. The great majority, 60%, were in the middle. I interpret this as evidence of where Cultural Analysis is making its mark but also where English teachers are feeling uncertain about how far to accept media education as a normal part of their work. This view is borne out by the question about resisting the influence of the media, 15% agreed, 40% disagreed and 45% were in the middle. English teachers seem to be changing their view of the role of the teacher in relation to media influence but many are unsure how far to go. This point is reinforced by the evident wish of teachers for their pupils to become more discriminating (statement 4.). Here only one respondent was in the middle, all others were in agreement, most of them strong agreement. The figure is 1.3, the second closest to 1 in the whole survey. Popular culture put most respondents back on the fence, 55% were in the middle and did not want to say whether they should be helping pupils to resist popular culture or not. However 40% were certain that they did not want to go against popular culture and therefore only 5% wished to do so.

I see this as a combination of Personal Growth and Cultural Analysis. Most English teachers are sensitive to and responsive to the extra-school life of their pupils, they feel it is important to encourage pupils to bring their own concerns into the classroom (Personal Growth) whilst at the same time encouraging them to analyse and reflect on what is going on around them (Cultural Analysis). When it comes to deciding whether the study of the media is as important as the study of literature then 40% are in the middle, 20% agree and 40% disagree. The aggregate result is 3.3, about as close to sitting on the fence as is possible.

7. It is notable that English teachers, despite these uncertainties about media education, are broadening their subject in a variety of ways. Cultural Heritage is seen as relatively unimportant now and over 80% felt that it was more important for pupils to know about a range of texts than the conventional canon. Over 40% strongly agreed with this idea.

OHP 3 HANDOUT 6

8., 9., 10., 11. and 12. are a cluster of questions about Knowledge About Language and Linguistics. Knowledge About Language, usually abbreviated to KAL, has been part of a particularly fierce debate in England; so fierce that the 40 million dollar, government funded project called 'Language in the National Curriculum, abbreviated to LINC, intended to train teachers to use KAL more effectively had its materials censored and finally banned from schools. That is a story for another day but I have included as a handout the chapter from the original Cox Report entitled Knowledge About Language.

The questions produced some interesting responses and for me one surprise. Knowledge About Language is welcomed almost universally, only 20% placing themselves in the middle and no-one was strongly against it. However, although about 60% agree that Knowledge About Language builds on good practice only 4 respondents were in strong agreement with this idea. There were still a sizeable minority, 25% who did not commit themselves either way. The surprise for me was that over 50% of English teachers said that Linguistics was not an increasing influence on English, in fact only 20% felt that it was. Similarly only about 15% felt that Linguistics is improving English teaching.

I found these responses puzzlingat first but it seems that what they may illustrate is that Knowledge About Language is not perceived by English teachers as Linguistics. In fact the juxtaposition on the questionnaire may emphasise this distinction. My other supposition is that the LINC project was doing a very good job in enthusing teachers about Knowledge About Language without making English teachers feel that they were dealing with 'real' Linguistics.

Another point is that Knowledge About Language is not part of the Cross-curricular model. English teachers see it as their specific business and again I feel that it is evidence of the increasing importance of Cultural Analysis. For example advocates of media education in Britain have expressed strong support for Knowledge About Language as providing pupils with the analytical approaches necessary for dealing with media texts. Knowledge About Language may be seen by teachers as both helping with Personal Growth and with Cultural Analysis, in this way it might help to explain why English specialists want to develop these two models together and feel that they can achieve this.

However, one revealing aspect of this whole survey is the continued predominance of literature for English teachers. When asked whether Knowledge About Language is more important than knowledge about literature 45% disagreed, 20% were borderline and only 25% agreed, not a single respondent strongly agreed. I feel that this shows English teachers want a text based approach to their work but other answers show quite clearly that this is not a narrow range of texts from the Cultural Heritage model.

13. The great majority of English teachers firmly rejected having the chief responsibility for Cross-curricular English. Personally I have never seen the Cross-curricular as a model of English held by English teachers. Perhaps the Language Across the Curriculum movement has left a legacy where other subject teachers expect the English Department to take a lead in whole school policies. Only 6 respondents agreed that English has this responsibility and none of them strongly, 70% disagreed and many did so strongly. I think that these replies help us to position the Cross-curricular model as a whole school concern whereas Knowledge About Language is an English department issue. In the primary school this distinction may not be valid but for Secondary specialists it is a matter of strong feeling. It would be interesting to relate these movements to the Whole Language debate in America.

14. It was a recommendation of both the Kingman Report, the report of a working party into the teaching of language in British schools and Cox that all language teachers should coooperate together more closely. The great majority agreed with this as a 2.4 figure suggests, however 25% were unconcerned either way and only 10% strongly agreed. This lukewarm response suggests to me that such cooperation is seen as 'a good thing' but that it is not a major concern.

15. One of the most powerful tensions in English in my opinion remains the perceived polarities between helping pupils prepare for the functional demands of the adult world and trying to develop their literary sensibilities. At present English teachers come down very heavily on one side of the debate. The great majority, 70%, place more importance on preparing pupils for 'A' level English than for work. In Britain 'A' level English is a very literary critical course taken by a tiny minority of pupils usually as part of their entrance requirement to University.

I suspect that the 'world of work' has negative associations for most English teachers. This majority view seems to be a rejection of the Adult Needs model of English, as does the evidence above in teachers' prioritising. Teachers placed Adult Needs equal last (with Cultural Heritage) at 3.7 on their list of personal priorities and last of all with 3.6 as a current influence on English teaching.

I still find this negative attitude hard to understand when Personal Growth remains the key model. What, one might ask, is all this growth for if not to be a balanced and capable adult in the social world? I recognise that for many English teachers their negative associations with the 'world of work' are justified by their real fears that pupils, especially the less able, will be force fed a diet of form filling and mock job interviews.

OHP 4 HAND OUT 8

16. and 17. This desire to ensure that pupils have a rich and balanced English curriculum as they approach adulthood is especially evident in responses about whether all pupils should study literature at Key Stage 4, that is between the ages of 14 and 16. Only one respondent disagreed and 90% agreed, 60% strongly. This view is balanced by strong support for all pupils following a curriculum with equal attention to language and literature, only one disagreeing with this idea and 85% in agreement. For the majority of English teachers this suggests that Personal Growth is fostered by a balance of attention between language and literature at all stages of the curriculum.

18., 19., 20. and 21. The last section of the questionnaire provides some fascinating insights into the values of English teachers and, if these results are typical of all English teachers, illustrates that there are indeed continuities in English teaching reaching back into the 19th century.

About 70% believe that literature has a civilising influence and 40% believe that strongly. No respondent disagreed with this though 30% stayed on the fence. Almost exactly the same response is generated by the statement that literature helps moral development, no-one disagrees, 30% stay on the fence and 70% agree, 35% of them strongly. If, as I have argued above, this is not a claim exclusively for the force of the Cultural Heritage but for a text-based approach to English then where does this leave Cultural Analysis? Many advocates for Cultural Analysis argue for an approach to English that helps pupils to deconstruct the ideologies of power and value that help to keep them, politically and in class terms, firmly in their place. These advocates are strongly critical of the 'abasement before the great text' approach to great literature, arguing that English teachers become, despite their best intentions, channels for repression. There is much in this view that I agree with but it remains an oversimplification to me and ultimately a very patronising one towards English teachers in general.

The most statistically significant result in the survey comes in response to number 20., pupils' personal response to literature is very important, the aggregate is 1.3. Almost 75% strongly agree with this idea and only one respondent was unsure. Not surprisingly, given the above response, the great majority rejected the idea that it was misleading to describe a pupil's response as personal. The results were that 65% disagreed, though only 15% felt this strongly, 20% were undecided. Once again these responses suggest to me the key place of Personal Growth in English teachers' thinking. I also feel sure that the influence of reader response theory plays its part in privileging, in the English teacher's eyes, the individual's response and further reducing the importance of the Cultural Heritage tradition.

DISCUSSION

As I have already indicated this survey cannot make too many claims as yet although I hope to substantiate its findings in the future and I do not wish to preempt a fuller discussion at some future date. However, bearing in mind those qualifying points, I feel that it is worth picking out some major issues for an initial response.

One outcome of the survey seems to be that Cox's five models are recognised by a wide range of English teachers and his claim that they are generally present in English departments seems to be true. I wonder if the same is true in America?

However there is evidence to suggest that the Cross-curricular is not an English teacher's model and that it is misleading to include it as such. It is interesting certainly that English teachers have firmly rejected responsibilty for orchestrating Language Across the Curriculum policies. However, as Cox suggested, English teachers do have varying priorities for four of these models.

The survey confirms that the Personal Growth model, developed in the 1960s and 1970, remains dominant. The high status of this model partly accounts for the gradual effacement of Cultural Heritage. The practical implications of Personal Growth in Brtain included coursework, oral work, redrafting, increased emphasis on drama and so on. The tendency of all these developments coupled to strong teacher influence on broadening the choice of texts available in the 1980s has been to lessen the dominance of 'great' texts in English.

As the power of the canon was weakened, at least in relation to its total dominance in the past, so Cultural Analysis became more of a possibility as a part of English work. What the survey suggests is that current English teachers subscribe to it as an approach and seem to be adopting it increasingly but it is not sweeping away Personal Growth.

The vital issue seems to be the nature of the relationship between Personal Growth and Cultural Analysis. At present my view is that these models are developing into a composite of both. The growth of media education is providing a common ground between them. Media education provides analytic rigour and contemporary relevance to English but, unlike media studies, it does not threaten Personal Growth's emphasis on the individual who grows through language use. Knowledge About Language supports and enhances the rigour of media education but it also provides the individual with more scope to explore the nature of values and ideologies present in language. Literature becomes a part of culture in a broad and not a canonical way. However, literature remains a civilising and moral influence, not because it is nationalistic in the Cultural Heritage sense but because it allows the individual to develop self and social awareness through refining responses to texts.

The survey illustrates that many English teachers are at a point of potential change in relation to popular culture and media education but they are uncertain, as yet, of how far to go. Again I wonder if media education and popular culture are becoming increasingly significant in American schools?

The Adult Needs model continues to be an unresolved problem. No English teacher rejects it as a model but almost none welcome it as an inspiring concern. I feel that there must be room for it within the budding alliance of Personal Growth and Cultural Analysis. However I think that at present 'A' level English remains, even in most of the more progressive syllabuses, the bastion of Cultural Heritage. Although English teachers want to give equal weight to language at Key Stage 4 they feel the overwhelming demands of 'A' level literature dominating their concerns. The result is, in my opinion, that the rich potential of the business of the world is undervalued as a focus for English work. I suspect that the influence of Cultural Analysis will eventually help to change matters but that process will be slow and difficult.

CONCLUSIONS OHP 5 HAND OUT 9

I am left with some final points.
I have treated the Cox models as though they are the only ones in existence but of course there have been a number of attempts to define the versions of English. My purpose has been, rather than including an overview of this aspect of the development of English, to concentrate on the currency and validity of the Cox models for practising English teachers. The survey shows that English teachers do recognise these models and value them as the basis for their teaching.

The next point is not suggested directly by the survey but I feel it is very important for future developments. In Britain we are in danger, as The National Curriculum presses more and more upon us, of becoming desparately insular. John Dixon's ***Growth Through English***, arguably one of the most influential books about teaching English since the war, was a direct result of working at the Dartmouth Seminar, a famous or is it notorious meeting at which American and British English teachers tried to sort out the similarities and differences in their philosophies of English teaching. Teachers in both countries would do well not to become too insular and self-obsessed and to recharge their thinking through considering how other models of English are developing elsewhere.

Finally, whatever the external impositions on the curriculum in Britain, Cultural Heritage is no longer a dominant model but knowledge about literature continues to be central to the great majority of English teachers. It does not look as if Cultural Analysis is replacing Personal Growth as the key model of English. Instead we face the intriguing possibility that during the 1990s some kind of synthesis or composite model will emerge. The Cross-curricular can perhaps be discounted as a model for English teachers. Adult Needs continues to be problematic and its status is uncertain. Perhaps it too can be absorbed into a composite model of Personal Growth and Cultural Analysis. One of our next steps might be to document classroom work and to relate it to the four important models to investigate not only what English teachers say about their philosophy but how they put into practice.

The survey suggests that we especially need to investigate what Cultural Analysis means to English teachers and to examine the teaching of media concepts and texts in relation to English. There may be a strong demand by all teachers for more help in finding ways of integrating such approaches in to their work and this has implications for pre-service teacher education and for inservice courses for the qualified.

HAND OUT 10 REFERENCES

HAND OUT 11 BOOK INFO

CHANGING MODELS OF ENGLISH TEACHING

NCTE CONFERENCE PAPER November 1992

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Handouts and copies of OHPs

BACKGROUND TO THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN ENGLAND AND WALES

In England and Wales a National Curriculum has been rapidly introduced over the last three years. One aspect of this has been an attempt to define and prescribe how English should be taught to all pupils from the ages of 5-16. A number of bodies have been influential in creating the English part of the National Curriculum. The most important of these was the English Working Party chaired by the Professor of Literature at Manchester University, Brian Cox, the committee and its documents have gradually become known as THE COX COMMITTEE and THE COX REPORT. The report forms the basis for the current description of English in the National Curriculum.

The Cox committee defined five models of English teaching, Personal Growth, Cross-curricular, Adult Needs, Cultural Heritage and Cultural Analysis. The full description of these models is included on a separate handout.

Brian Cox's argument has always been that these models were relatively uncontentious in themselves "It is possible to identify within the English teaching profession a number of different views of the subject. We list them here, though we stress that they are not the only possible views, they are not sharply distinguishable, and they are certainly not mutually exclusive."

This paragraph, expressed in such apparently simple and objective terms, contains several issues that need attention. If it is possible to identify these views with such ease then exactly where are they found and who has expounded them? If they are not the only possible views then are there other important views that Cox and his committee were consciously avoiding? If the views are not sharply distinguishable then how can they be set out as if they are quite distinct? Equally which views are complementary to the others, is there no tension in this diverse grouping? Is there a hierarchy of models that exists in practice if not in theory? The authority of these views being "certainly not mutually exclusive" begs the significant question of exactly who says so apart from Cox and his committee.

The paragraph quoted above which introduces the "views of English" clearly has a rhetorical intention and one which is a dominating feature of the whole report. We are invited to share in the exquisite balance of views, to join the reasonable consensus that somehow manages to operate, for example, the conservative cultural heritage at the same time as the radical cultural analysis.

THE UNIVERSITY OF READING FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY STUDIES

'APPROACHES TO ENGLISH TEACHING' QUESTIONNAIRE

The Cox Report put forward five models of English teaching, please see the accompanying photocopy, and suggested that these are present in all English departments. With your cooperation we would like to find out whether these models are all present and how you feel about them. We would also like to gauge how you view certain key aspects of current English teaching. As you will see the main part of the questionnaire can be filled in in a few moments although it may take longer than that to decide on your views. We feel that it is vital that the views of the teachers of English are taken into account when making large generalisations about the teaching of our subject. We hope to use our findings to show to what extent English teachers are changing their views of the subject and to identify areas in which they would like help in their professional development. Please return the questionnaire in the envelope provided, all responses are strictly confidential.

Please begin by ringing the appropriate categories.

AGE 20-25 25-30 30-35 35-40 40-45 45-50 50-55 55-60 60-65

MALE FEMALE TOTAL YEARS IN TEACHING 0-2 3-5 5-10 11-15 16-25 26 or more

DO YOU HAVE AN ENGLISH DEGREE YES NO ARE YOU AN ENGLISH SPECIALIST YES NO

(A) After looking over the 'Cox' models please place them in order of importance to you, 1 indicating most important, 5 least important.

PERSONAL GROWTH [ ] CROSS-CURRICULAR [ ] ADULT NEEDS [ ]

CULTURAL HERITAGE [ ] CULTURAL ANALYSIS [ ]

(B) In English teaching at present which models do you consider to be the most influential, please place them in order of influence, 1 indicating most and 5 least influential.

PERSONAL GROWTH [ ] CROSS-CURRICULAR [ ] ADULT NEEDS [ ]

CULTURAL HERITAGE [ ] CULTURAL ANALYSIS [ ]

The next section is a series of statements, can you indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with them, simply ring the appropriate number as follows :- 1 - strongly agree, 2 - agree, 3 - mixed reaction, 4 - disagree, 5 - strongly disagree.

	AGREE				DISAGREE
1. English teachers should use all five models in their teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Media education belongs principally in English.	1	2	3	4	5
3. English teachers should teach their pupils to resist the influence of the media	1	2	3	4	5
4. English teachers should teach their pupils to be more discriminating about the media.	1	2	3	4	5
5. English teachers should teach pupils to resist the influence of popular culture.	1	2	3	4	5

	AGREE				DISAGREE
6. In English the study of the media is as important as the study of literature.	1	2	3	4	5
7. It is more important for pupils to have knowledge of a range of texts than of the conventional literary canon.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Knowledge about Language is a welcome addition to English.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Knowledge about Language builds on existing good practice in English.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Linguistics is an increasing influence in English teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
11. The influence of Linguistics is improving English teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Ultimately Knowledge about Language is more important than knowledge about literature.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Language Across the Curriculum is chiefly the responsibility of English teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
14. All teachers of language i.e. English, ESL, Modern languages other languages, should cooperate closely	1	2	3	4	5
15. It is more important for pupils aged 16 to be prepared for the world of work than for studying 'A' level English.	1	2	3	4	5
16. All pupils should study literature at Key Stage Four	1	2	3	4	5
17. The study of literature and of language should play equal parts at Key Stage Four.	1	2	3	4	5
18. The study of literature has a civilising influence.	1	2	3	4	5
19. The study of literature helps moral development.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Pupils' personal response to literature is very important	1	2	3	4	5
21. It is misleading to suggest that a pupil's response to literature is personal.	1	2	3	4	5

The survey has given you no space to explain your reasons for your views but we would welcome any points that you might like to make. You could either refer to a question number or simply write some general points; equally if you think that any question is unclear or unhelpful then please comment. We hope that the questionnaire helps you review your current thinking please let us know if it does. If you are interested in taking part in a brief interview (10-15 minutes) about your views than add your name and school at the bottom of the sheet. Any interview would be arranged to suit your convenience.

NAME _____ SCHOOL _____ CONTACT TELEPHONE NO. _____

Thank you for you help Andrew Goodwyn Lecturer in Education (Tel: 0734 875123-4899)

The role of English in the curriculum

2.20 It is possible to identify within the English teaching profession a number of different views of the subject. We list them here, though we stress that they are not the only possible views, they are not sharply distinguishable, and they are certainly not mutually exclusive.

2.21 A "personal growth" view focuses on the child: it emphasises the relationship between language and learning in the individual child, and the role of literature in developing children's imaginative and aesthetic lives.

2.22 A "cross-curricular" view focuses on the school: it emphasises that all teachers (of English and of other subjects) have a responsibility to help children with the language demands of different subjects on the school curriculum: otherwise areas of the curriculum may be closed to them. In England, English is different from other school subjects, in that it is both a subject and a medium of instruction for other subjects.

2.23 An "adult needs" view focuses on communication outside the school: it emphasises the responsibility of English teachers to prepare children for the language demands of adult life, including the workplace, in a fast-changing world. Children need to learn to deal with the day-to-day demands of spoken language and of print; they also need to be able to write clearly, appropriately and effectively.

2.24 A "cultural heritage" view emphasises the responsibility of schools to lead children to an appreciation of those works of literature that have been widely regarded as amongst the finest in the language.

2.25 A "cultural analysis" view emphasises the role of English in helping children towards a critical understanding of the world and cultural environment in which they live. Children should know about the processes by which meanings are conveyed, and about the ways in which print and other media carry values.

2.26 Some of these views look inwards: either in the sense of developing the individual child or in the sense of developing English as a separate school subject. Other views look outwards: they are concerned with helping the child with the needs of language elsewhere in the curriculum, or in the outside world of work. Alternatively, they are concerned with passing on the culture from one generation to the next, and with critically understanding what that culture consists of. Another distinction is that some of the approaches concern essentially the child's developing use of language, whereas others concern the knowledge about language and literature required of an informed and educated citizen in a democratic society.

2.27 Teachers of English will differ in the weight they give to each of these views of the subject. Indeed, some differentiation will derive directly from the stage children have reached at school: for example, the "adult needs" view is more relevant to the later years of compulsory schooling than to the primary years. Some aspects of "cultural analysis" are also more relevant to older children. However, aspects of media education are also important for children in the primary phase, because they can be influenced by the conventions and assumptions of mass media, and should learn to recognise this.

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MODELS OF ENGLISH TEACHING

	PERSONAL PRIORITIES	CURRENT INFLUENCES
Personal Growth	1.43	2.1
Adult Needs	3.7	3.6
Cross-curricular	3.5	2.5
Cultural Heritage	3.7	3.5
Cultural Analysis	2.5	3.3

ENGLISH AND MEDIA EDUCATION

Does media education belong in English?

15% agreed 25% disagreed 60% in the middle

Should we resist the influence of the media?

15% agreed 40% disagreed 45% were in the middle.

Should pupils become more discriminating?

Strong agreement The figure is 1.3

Popular culture?

55% were in the middle 40% did not want to go against popular culture 5% wished to do so.

Is the study of the media is as important as the study of literature?

40% are in the middle, 20% agree and 40% disagree

aggregate result is 3.3

ENGLISH AND LANGUAGE

Knowledge About Language is welcomed almost universally.

20% in the middle and no-one strongly against.

60% agree that Knowledge About Language builds on good practice

only 4 respondents in strong agreement

Over 50% of English teachers said that Linguistics was not an increasing influence on English

Only 20% felt that it was.

15% felt that Linguistics is improving English teaching.

Is Knowledge About Language more important than knowledge about literature?

45% disagreed 20% borderline
25% agreed

not a single respondent strongly agreed

6 Knowledge about language

"Grammar, perfectly understood, enables us, not only to express our meaning fully and clearly, but so to express it as to defy the ingenuity of man to give to our words any other meaning than that which we ourselves intend them to express."[1]

6.1 Primary teachers and secondary English teachers regularly impart a great deal of knowledge about language to their pupils and encourage them to make explicit, and to share with others, the implicit knowledge they have already acquired as language users. For example, in many classrooms pupils can be found discussing the differences in vocabulary there would be between an on-the-spot oral account of a road accident and a newspaper report of it the following day; or considering the ways in which conventional spellings can be violated in advertisements and brand names; or listing some of the differences between their grandparents' use of language and their own; or talking about the way a poet's choice of metaphor yokes together two dissimilar things so that something familiar is suddenly perceived in a new way; and so on. Teaching about language is then, in broad terms, not a new departure for most English teachers. However, treating knowledge about language systematically and giving it explicit mention in the syllabus is not universal in English departments in England and Wales.

6.2 **We believe that knowledge about language should be an integral part of work in English, not a separate body of knowledge to be added on to the traditional English curriculum.** Rather, as pupils extend their skills, abilities, understanding and responsiveness in speaking, listening, reading and writing, the teacher's role is to highlight those aspects that will lead to a greater awareness of the nature and functions of language. This awareness should, in turn, contribute to the pupils' own sensitivity as language users. For this reason, we are not proposing that knowledge about language should have its own profile component. To treat it separately would be to risk giving rise to the misconception that it should be separately timetabled, taught and assessed, rather than integrated in the speaking, listening, reading and writing activities of any English lesson. Accordingly, the content which we see as essential to knowledge about language is incorporated in the three profile components, Speaking and listening, Reading, and Writing, both in the statements of attainment and in the programmes of study.

6.3 There are two further reasons for our recommendations taking this form. First, many teachers are worried about the curriculum being overloaded. There are constant pressures from relatively new areas of study, such as information technology, film and television and so on. If we had proposed a separate profile component for knowledge about language, it might have been seen as having a weight (in terms of content, teaching time and assessment) which was disproportionate in relation to the English curriculum as a whole. The other reason is the extent of teachers' own knowledge about language. As is argued at length in the Kingman Report, substantial programmes of teacher training are required if teachers are themselves to know enough to enable them to design with confidence programmes of study about language. Such training is now underway. It may be, when such training programmes have been followed for a few years, that it would be appropriate for knowledge about language to become a separate profile component. We recommend that HMI should advise on this, and that the NCC should periodically review the structure of the English curriculum with this in mind. In the meanwhile, we have not felt it right to make aspects of knowledge about language in the programmes of study (which will be legally obligatory for every pupil working at levels 5 to 10) too extensive or demanding. Even so, we know from our own visits to schools that, in some places, richer and broader work than we outline is already being done very successfully. For example, in some multi-lingual classrooms pupils carry out activities that make them aware of some of the similarities and differences among their languages; in other classrooms pupils write playscripts in regional dialect or study the language of Chaucer. There is no need for such work to be abandoned because it does not feature explicitly in our programmes of study – and, indeed, it would be the opposite of our intention if this were to happen.

6.4 However, our approach of presenting the subject matter within three profile components has the disadvantages that knowledge about language can appear fragmented and that teachers and pupils might not see the possibilities for coherent [illegible]. The general rationale is therefore set out in this chapter, and we also repeat the statements of attainment from the three profile components, bringing them together in order to show their coherence.

[1] *A Grammar of the English Language*, William Cobbett.

Rationale for explicit knowledge about language in the English curriculum

6.5 Despite its cogent arguments, the conclusions of the Kingman Inquiry in favour of the teaching of knowledge about language are still rejected by some. We ourselves therefore find it necessary to state a case for teaching pupils about language.

6.6 **Two justifications for teaching pupils explicitly about language are, first, the positive effect on aspects of their use of language and secondly, the general value of such knowledge as an important part of their understanding of their social and cultural environment, since language has vital functions in the life of the individual and of society.**

6.7 Language is central to individual human development; human society is inconceivable without it. Therefore it is intrinsically interesting and worthy of study in its own right. There are important social implications of such knowledge. Language is not merely a neutral medium for the conveying of information; it can trigger emotional responses which may spring from prejudice, stereotyping or misunderstanding. Such attitudes need to be laid open to examination and discussion. Moreover, people need an informed understanding if they are to evaluate claims about language use which are widely made (in correspondence columns of newspapers, for example).

6.8 As far as the effect of knowledge about language on pupils' own language skill is concerned, it is true that it has been difficult or impossible to show any direct cause-and-effect relation between teaching formal grammar and improved writing performance. However, most of the research has relied upon a narrow and traditional form of grammar teaching. The broader approach that we advocate covers not only sentence structure but also larger patterns of organisation, not only the forms of written academic English but also a range of stylistic and dialectal varieties, not only language structure but also meaning and use. We believe that such an approach should help to improve pupils' sensitivity to their own use of language.

6.9 It is also undoubtedly useful for teachers to be able to refer to features of pupils' work when they are correcting it or trying to help pupils in some way. For example, pupils who speak (and therefore possibly write) in a non-standard dialect of English may need help to see that their dialect is regular and patterned, and to recognise the systematic differences between it and formal, academic Standard English. Moreover, terminology is essential in understanding many standard reference books about language, such as dictionaries. (Such a terminology is also of use in foreign language teaching.) Technical terms are not ends in themselves, but because they facilitate discussion, they do need to be explicitly taught.

Principles underlying programmes of study

6.10 Teachers and textbook writers need a framework of understanding which ensures that they avoid underestimating the complex competence which all native speakers have in their mother tongue. Helpful distinctions can be made between different kinds of knowledge about language, eg

- implicit and explicit knowledge;
- monolingual and bilingual competence;
- prescriptive and descriptive approaches;
- knowledge appropriate to teachers or to pupils;
- what all pupils need to know contrasted with what some choose to learn.

Some of these distinctions can be discussed with pupils.

6.11 Work should start from the pupils' own linguistic competence. Many pupils in schools are bilingual and sometimes biliterate, and quite literally know more about language than their teachers, at least in some respects. All pupils are able, to some extent, to change their style of language according to their audience. This competence is a huge resource which should not be ignored but made explicit. A problem in studying language is that it is often too close to individual speakers to be observed dispassionately: it is either taken for granted and not seen at all, or is too intimately involved in individual and social identity to be discussed objectively. But the fact that pupils already know a great deal about their native language(s) is a big

advantage: this implicit knowledge is there to be made explicit.

6.12 Work on knowledge about language can be based on pupils' own fieldwork, collecting and classifying their own data, learning about the methodology of observation, classification, description, hypothesis making and explanation. The teacher's task will often be to help pupils to systematise knowledge which they already have or evidence which they collect, and to keep the focus clear.

6.13 Courses should not be watered down linguistics. They should, however, be informed by principles and insights drawn from linguistics – for example, the idea that language in all its diversity can be approached in a non-prescriptive, non-judgmental way and that it is possible to treat systematically and objectively an aspect of human life which is often the focus of emotive and prejudiced reactions.

6.14 Materials should bring out the social significance of knowledge about language. It should lead to more understanding of language diversity, including multilingualism, and be closely related to pupils' experience in their own communities, and therefore be treated with great sensitivity to pupils' home backgrounds.

6.15 The preceding points imply certain desirable features in the programmes of study in knowledge about language. They should be based primarily on resource materials, which might include samples of language data (spoken, written, literary, non-literary, standard, non-standard, English and other languages) and facts and figures about languages in Britain and around the world, and associated activities which are essentially concrete and problem-based, so that the pupils can make their own enquiries, and so that the teacher can learn alongside the pupils. The data are all around, once teachers and pupils know what to look for. It is therefore possible for teachers to develop their own materials. Comparative study (of different languages, dialects, styles, etc) can make explicit what is usually taken for granted about language. We all tend to think that our own language somehow embodies the "natural" way of doing things.

Knowledge about language in the school curriculum

6.16 The steady and purposeful development of pupils' language and of their skill in its use should be a constant aim of education at all stages and levels. The form in which knowledge about language is communicated will vary with the age and ability of the pupil, from play activities in pre-school to explicit systematic knowledge in upper secondary education. Some play activities, suitable for primary age children, are illustrated in chapter 5; more explicit knowledge about language, appropriate to the secondary curriculum, is discussed here.

6.17 Language topics can be studied from a number of points of view. A systematic approach to language study can be developed by considering any aspect of language in terms of its forms and meanings, its social uses and effects, and how it varies.

6.18 Language is a system of sounds, meanings and structures with which we make sense of the world around us. It functions as a tool of thought; as a means of social organisation; as the repository and means of transmission of knowledge; as the raw material of literature, and as the creator and sustainer – or destroyer – of human relationships. It changes inevitably over time and, as change is not uniform, from place to place. Because language is a fundamental part of being human, it is an important aspect of a person's sense of self; because it is a fundamental feature of any community, it is an important aspect of a person's sense of social identity.

6.19 To take account of the nature and functions of language outlined in 6.18, a syllabus for knowledge about language should cover the following material:

1) Language variation according to situation, purpose, language mode, regional or social group, etc

Nobody speaks – or writes – in the same way on all occasions. We alter our language according to who we are talking to, what we are writing about, whether it is for social, transactional or literary purposes, and so on. The most obvious variations are the contrasts between speech and writing and between the formal and informal in both modes. An understanding of such variation should help pupils to select the appropriate vocabulary and grammar for a given purpose and to recognise why communication sometimes breaks down when inappropriate choices are made.

Even though no two people speak or write in just the same way, groups of people share sufficient language characteristics (of accent, vocabulary and grammar) to bind them together and to distinguish them from other groups. So language alone often allows us to tell whether someone is from Liverpool or London, from England or Scotland, or from Britain, Australia or the United States. Moreover, the specialised language of certain occupational groups (for example, builders, doctors, lawyers, mechanics, and scientists) is often distinctive. A sensitivity to this type of variation should contribute towards pupils becoming more tolerant of linguistic diversity, more aware of the richness it can provide and more able to cope with problems of communication.

Accordingly, in the **Speaking and Listening** profile component, the statements of attainment relate to children's growing ability to talk explicitly about:

- regional and social variations in English accents and dialects; and attitudes to such variations; the range of purposes which spoken language serves; and the forms and functions of spoken Standard English.

In the **Writing** profile component, the statements of attainment relate to children's growing ability to talk and write explicitly about:

- some of the main differences between speech and writing; the range of purposes that written language serves.

2) Language in literature

Although there can be no clearcut division between the use of language in literature and in everyday life (and it would not be fruitful to attempt to make such a division), we can recognise that some of the most arresting, innovative and enriching uses of language come from the poets, novelists and dramatists who practise the craft of writing. Awareness of these uses should help pupils to respond to texts with greater understanding, to recognise when language is being used manipulatively, and to strive for a creative vigour of expression in their own writing.

3) Language variation across time

English is changing all the time. There have been considerable changes in vocabulary and slight changes in pronunciation over the last 50 years. Grammatical change is slower but readily discernible if we take a time span of 400 years. Knowledge about language change makes it possible for pupils to understand more fully the nature of Standard English and how it relates to other varieties.

Accordingly in the **Reading** profile component, the statements of attainment relate to pupils' growing ability to talk and write explicitly about:

- some of the main characteristics of literary language; and how it conveys meanings;
- some of the ways in which English is constantly changing between generations and over the centuries; and people's attitudes to such change.

6.20 All of these aspects of knowledge about language interlock – just as speaking, listening, reading and writing themselves are interrelated – and it is not possible or desirable to keep them apart. So the reading of a poem by Wordsworth, for example, could raise questions concerning the differences between poetic and everyday language, the nature of Cumbrian place names and topographical terms, the effect of word order alterations, changes in vocabulary during the past 150 years, and so on.

6.21 Pupils' developing understanding is marked in several ways:

It is usually easier to give examples from local varieties of English (in the family or local community), than to discuss a wider range of varieties, which are more distant, geographically, socially or historically.

It is usually easier to talk about language, than to write about it.

It is usually easier to give examples of individual words (which distinguish dialects, styles, etc), than to give examples of pronunciation, grammar and textual organisation.

It is easier to give relevant, but isolated, examples than to give more systematic and sustained descriptions and analyses; and description is easier than discussing the principles underlying the examples.

The ordering of the statements of attainment in knowledge about language takes account of this pattern of development.

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ENGLISH AND LITERATURE

Should all pupils study literature between the ages of 14 and 16?

90% agreed 60% strongly agreed.

There is strong support for all pupils following a curriculum with equal attention to language and literature 85% were in agreement.

70% believe that literature has a civilising influence

40% believe that strongly

30% were in the middle

Does literature help moral development?

No disagreement.

30% in the middle 70% agree, 35% strongly.

Is pupils' personal response to literature very important?

The aggregate is 1.3. 75% strongly agreed.

Is it misleading to describe a pupil's response as personal?

65% disagreed 15% strongly
20% were undecided

SOME CONCLUSIONS

English teachers do recognise the 'Cox' models and value them as the basis for their teaching.

The National Curriculum may lead to insularity.

Teachers can recharge their thinking through considering how other models of English are developing elsewhere.

In Britain, Cultural Heritage is no longer a dominant model

Knowledge about literature continues to be central

Cultural Analysis is not simply replacing Personal Growth

In the 1990s some kind of synthesis or composite model may emerge

The Cross-curricular can perhaps be discounted

Adult Needs continues to be problematic and its status is uncertain

It may be absorbed into a composite model of Personal Growth and Cultural Analysis.

There is a need to document classroom work and to relate it to the four important models.

We especially need: -

to investigate what Cultural Analysis means to English teachers

to examine the teaching of media concepts and texts in relation to English.

potential changes to teacher education

SOME POINTS OF REFERENCE

English for Ages 5-16. DES 1989 known as The Cox Report.

Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Teaching of English Language. HMSO, 1988, best known as The Kingman Report.

There are a great many texts in the debate about definitions of English, some of the most notable examples from Britain are:-

James Britton, ***Language and Learning.*** Penguin, 1970

John Dixon, ***Growth Through English.*** Oxford University Press, 1967

Douglas and Dorothy Barnes ***Versions of English.*** 1984

Brian Cox, **Cox on Cox: An English Curriculum for the 1990s. Hodder and Stoughton, 1991.**

Ken Jones, ed. ***English and the National Curriculum: Cox's Revolution.*** Kogan Page, 1992.

In Britain David Buckingham has produced some especially stimulating ideas about the relationship between English and media education in ***The English Magazine***, 23 and 24, and in ***Watching Media Learning.*** The Falmer Press, 1990 and I discuss this relationship in great detail in Andrew Goodwyn, ***English Teaching and Media Education.*** Open University Press, November, 1992.

A recent issue of 'English in Education', Vol. 26, no. 3, Autumn 1992 includes a range of articles on models of English including one of my own that provides a more extended analysis of my research.